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## Preparation and Status of Personnel

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THE BASIC ELEMENTS of library service are books, staff, and buildings, and in precisely that order of importance. Each is dependent upon the other. Without a properly trained and supervised staff, books and buildings amount to no more than paper and brick. While there have been librarians without formal training who have been among our most outstanding leaders, they have been men who would probably have been successful in any field to which their peculiar talents might have led them. There have been libraries whose staffs have gone about their work joyously and effectively despite low pay and anomalous status; but such libraries do not represent a tradition that may be recommended.

The now classic Williamson report<sup>1</sup> with its twin recommendations that library schools be attached to universities and that advanced studies in library *science* be encouraged is a foundation stone in the development of education for academic librarianship. Significant steps in the implementation of the Williamson report were the establishment of the Board of Education for Librarianship in 1924 and of the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago in 1928. In spite of sound achievements by these two agencies and steady improvement in education for librarianship in general, the faculties and officials of American higher institutions have not been in unanimous agreement that the best librarians were necessarily those with formal training. All aspects of the library schools themselves have been subjected to sharp criticism. Not the least important of this criticism has come from librarians and library school professors.<sup>2, 3</sup> Perhaps the most serious indictment of the schools has been the charge that the vocational content of most library school curricula overshadowed the intellectual; that the librarian was successfully insulating himself

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against a knowledge of the content of books.<sup>4</sup> Such a state of affairs is intolerable in the college and university world.

In 1946 two documents appeared about the same time; and together they may well prove to be as significant as the Williamson report in that both were precursors of far-reaching changes. Danton's *Education for Librarianship; Criticisms, Dilemmas, and Proposals*<sup>5</sup> and Wheeler's *Progress and Problems in Education for Librarianship*<sup>6</sup> identified the basic problems that were to motivate the changes about to take place. From the standpoint of academic librarianship some of the gravest criticisms were precisely those that had been made by nearly all observers for the previous quarter of a century, viz., emphasis on techniques rather than professional and intellectual aspects of librarianship, failure to produce scholarly librarians competent in specific subject fields, failure to produce real leaders and administrators, failure to develop curricula of graduate calibre on the master's level, and the disadvantages of a second bachelor's degree for a fifth year of work.

At the same time nearly all library schools began to re-examine their curricula and degrees. Some effort was made to introduce courses aimed at detailed bibliographical training in broad subject fields (e.g., literature of the humanities, of science and technology, of social sciences), but only two or three of the best supported schools have actually been able to attract authorities in these fields to their faculties. Much more spectacular was the great change in degree offerings: (1) the discontinuance of the old B.S. in L.S. and the offering of a master's degree for the first year of post-baccalaureate professional study, and (2) the offering of a bona fide Ph.D. in library science by three schools in addition to Chicago.

The substitution of the master's for the baccalaureate as the first professional library degree for graduate study implied to a number of institutions (among them, Chicago and Denver, which first introduced such programs) that some professional training should be offered at the undergraduate level. Other institutions felt that such dilution of the pre-professional training of a student in some academic subject could only have an undesirable effect on his preparation,<sup>7, 8</sup> and, indeed, this would also seem to be the attitude of many representative university teachers and administrators with respect to the preparation of their library staff members. By June of 1948 ten of the twenty-three accredited library schools which had heretofore given a fifth-year professional bachelor's degree were offering the master's instead.

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In the next two years the old bachelor's degree was to be virtually forced out of business; and only the University of California at Berkeley still gives the old A.B.L.S. and requires a second year of graduate study for the master's degree (although it was only in 1947 that this institution substituted the bachelor's degree for the certificate in librarianship for the first year of graduate study).

From the standpoint of academic libraries, an even more important step has been the decision to offer a Ph.D. in librarianship at Columbia, and the Universities of Illinois and Michigan. To be sure, for almost two decades these institutions had authorized doctorates with library science as a minor; but the failure of this plan to attract students is clearly illustrated by the fact that only three students at the University of Illinois took advantage of it, whereas twenty-five Illinois students went on to Chicago to study for the Ph.D. in librarianship at that institution.

Illinois first instituted a doctoral program, and in the spring of 1948 the degree of Doctor of Library Science was authorized for that school. Candidates were accepted the following summer. In November 1948 the University of Michigan approved a Ph.D. program in library science, and it went into operation the following semester. It is interesting to note that the Department of Library Science at Michigan had an understanding with the Graduate School that enrollment would be limited for the doctor's degree to ten students in residence at any one time. In the early fall of 1951 a three-fold doctoral program was announced at Columbia: (1) The degree of Doctor of Library Science for students wishing to place a major emphasis on library science, a program to be administered by the Faculty of Library Service; (2) the degree of Doctor of Philosophy for students wishing to divide their time more or less equally between librarianship and subject study and whose dissertation requires both library and subject background, a program to be administered by an interdepartmental committee with members of the Faculty of Library Service included on examining groups set up by this committee; and (3) the degree of Doctor of Philosophy for students whose primary interests are in non-library research and who intend to write a dissertation dealing solely or primarily with subject material, but who also desire to take a minor sequence of library courses as a part of their doctoral work, a program to be administered by the department of major registration.

Several months prior to the approval of the Columbia doctorate,

Illinois had discarded the degree of Doctor of Library Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. In October 1951 Illinois awarded its first Ph.D. in library science. At the date of this writing California is the only one of the five major library schools which has no doctoral program, although the annual report of the dean for 1947-48 reflected that a request for such a program had been made to the Graduate Council of that university.<sup>9</sup>

Has the doctorate in library science, as developed at Chicago, proven to be more desirable than a subject doctorate? Will the new doctoral programs provide better preparation for librarians than they would have received had they come up through a subject field? This is an unanswerable and probably an idle question. It is likely that more librarians will be attracted to doctoral programs in their own professional field than in fields in which they hold only an undergraduate major. On the other hand, we have no conclusive evidence that a Ph.D. in librarianship, or, for that matter, in any other field, is a primary element in a librarian's success. Certainly the administrative officers of Yale, Michigan, Princeton, Pennsylvania, and other major institutions were afflicted by some of these same doubts when they recommended appointments of head librarians in competition with a field which included a goodly number of Chicago Ph.D's.

With regard to the debate concerning the subject matter doctorate for librarians, it may be worthwhile to call attention to a series of articles by German librarians during the post-war years. It is a rather curious situation that the Germans have theorized so extensively concerning education for academic librarianship and yet have never managed to set up a school or faculty similar to our library schools in colleges and universities. Georg Leyh delivered an address before a group of special librarians in Stockholm in 1949<sup>10</sup> in which he pleaded for a scholarly librarian who would cultivate especially those fields in which a librarian may acquire special competence; and many of these fields are as appropriate to a subject department as to a professional school (e.g., history of printing, history of higher education and research libraries, paleography). Again, in a well-conceived polemic published in the *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*<sup>11</sup> Leyh defines some of the specific fields of research for the librarian; and Albert Predeek has even erected a "Systematik der Bibliothekswissenschaft" in which he lists and classifies the various fields of study in librarianship.<sup>12</sup> It is significant to note, however, that Predeek gives a prominent place in his system to "auxiliary disciplines" and that

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Leyh also emphasizes many aspects of library science which have traditionally been taught in other departments. Accordingly, the problem seems to be primarily one of reorganization of instructional practices if we follow Leyh and Predeek. Education for librarianship in the United States and in the U.S.S.R.<sup>12</sup> has been characterized by just such a reorganization, while western Europe seems to hang on to the notion of educating the librarian in existing university departments. The present writer has expressed himself in another connection as favoring the latter possibility, at least as an alternative to the graduate schools of librarianship,<sup>13</sup> and the Columbia plan has recognized this alternative. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that only in an independent library school will research on specific problems of librarianship and publications (e.g., *Library Trends*) develop most readily.

Regardless of a librarian's preparation, regardless of whether or not he holds a doctorate in librarianship or in some other field, his position within the academic community is still somewhat anomalous. There has been no comprehensive survey of the academic librarian's status on a national scale; but three limited studies mentioned below reveal little uniformity in practices within specific regions or within specific groups of libraries. One fact is still abundantly and painfully obvious: in most academic institutions the salaries of librarians of all ranks are still distinctly lower than salaries for corresponding ranks in the teaching faculty. A survey conducted in 1950 by a special committee of the University of Kentucky chapter of the American Association of University Professors revealed that in only one of fifteen comparable institutions were library salaries higher for ranks corresponding to associate professor, assistant professor, and instructor. It is likely that even in the exceptional case library salaries were higher only because they contained a differential for a twelve-months' contract as opposed to nine for the teaching staff. Other studies, including two to which reference will be made shortly, indicate the same situation.

There does seem to be a definite trend towards granting of academic rank to professional librarians, even though it is not always accompanied by appropriate salary adjustments. Although complete information as to which institutions give academic rank is lacking, the trend may be identified by the increasing number of announcements in the library press from individual institutions which are adopting this policy. Lundy's study of a group of representative university libraries<sup>14</sup> indicated that in fourteen institutions the professional library

staff was clearly identified with the teaching and research staff rather than with the administrative and clerical group. In eight institutions librarians were given academic rank with varying reservations and limitations; in seven others institutional librarians were considering the possibility of attaining academic rank; and in the remaining seven academic rank was not considered the most convenient or desirable means of securing the recognition to which the majority of professionally trained librarians would seem to be entitled. In 1948 Spain<sup>15</sup> discovered a somewhat more positive attitude toward faculty rank in 108 Southern colleges and universities. In 62 per cent of the institutions there was faculty status for all professional librarians; in 31 per cent faculty status for some but not all; and in 8 per cent no faculty status for any professional librarian. Spain also discovered that librarians enjoyed privileges comparable to those of the teaching staff in matters such as attendance at faculty meetings, committee work, and tenure, although there was much difference in salary, vacation, and leaves. It should be noted that Spain's group of institutions were, on the whole, much smaller than Lundy's. In the smaller institutions one is not likely to find many scholars of national and international prominence whose earning power and prestige is as great off the campus as on the campus. Although there is little qualitative difference between the rank and file of librarians in a normal college and those in a large university, there is a vast difference between the teaching faculties; and therefore librarians are much more likely to win academic equality in the smaller institution. Powell is even more stern in his statement of this situation: "On every academic library staff I have any acquaintance with, I can count on a few fingers the number of persons who can establish intellectual camaraderie with the faculty. Until this can be done by a majority of a staff, talk of equal rank with the faculty is a waste of breath."<sup>16</sup>

As if to add confusion to the national picture, Gelfand<sup>17</sup> discovered a picture of the librarian in the academic community of the eastern liberal arts college which varies both from Lundy's and from Spain's presentations. After tabulating fifty replies to a questionnaire he discovered definite disagreement among librarians as well as among administrators and teachers as to whether the library is an administrative or an instructional agency. In only 24 per cent of his group was faculty rank accorded to all members of the professional library staff, although 72 per cent of the chief librarians held rank. In direct contradiction to practices in the South as revealed by Spain, relatively few chief librarians serve on the most important college committees, and other



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staff members rarely serve on any college committees of any importance. Just as in the Kentucky survey, Gelfand found that most librarians' salaries are lower than teachers' salaries for comparable ranks.

It would seem, therefore, that faculty rank, while often desirable, is no panacea for inadequate salaries and status not commensurate with ability and importance of assignment. There is little difficulty in some instances—for example, in the libraries of New York's five municipal colleges—in giving absolute equality of pay and rank to librarians.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, the University of Illinois, afflicted with a particularly iniquitous application of civil service to library appointments prior to 1944, has worked out a highly satisfactory classification scheme by which some employees are grouped with teachers, others with administrative officers.<sup>19</sup> But the really significant thing about the Illinois scheme is that it is adapted to the local situation and has actually resulted in salary scales corresponding to those of the teaching staff, in a high sense of professional pride and responsibility, and in acceptance of librarians as equals by their fellow members of the academic community. Still another individualistic approach to the status problem, conditioned to the local situation, has been reported from the University of Utah Library.<sup>20</sup> There seems to be no sure-fire formula for improving the status and salaries of librarians in all institutions.

Perhaps one of the main reasons for the librarian's deficiency in academic respectability and his relatively low salary has been his failure to distinguish between routine techniques and professional and intellectual aspects of his work. Williamson;<sup>1</sup> Munn;<sup>2</sup> Metcalf, Russell, and Osborn;<sup>21</sup> Wheeler;<sup>6</sup> and Danton<sup>5</sup> all pointed out this questionable aspect of library school curricula; and it has carried over from the schools into actual professional work. Danton, whose work properly carries the word "proposals" in its title, is the only critic to offer a constructive suggestion with his concept of three levels of library service, viz., technical or sub-professional, middle service, and administrative-specialist. The concept of the middle service was borrowed from the Prussians, who introduced it generally in the first decades of this century. It should be observed, however, that not all German librarians are in full agreement that the creation of the middle service has solved all or even most of their problems revolving around the definition of professional work.

McDiarmid gave a concrete and suggestive approach to the problem in his address on "Training Clerical and Subprofessional Workers" at the Graduate Library School Conference in 1948.<sup>22</sup> He proposed the

creation of a corps of workers to do those tasks which cannot be economically performed by Danton's administrative-specialist. Once the latter has been relieved from the performance of routine duties, he will be free to plan and execute his work in a manner that will earn him academic respectability. Some doubt was expressed concerning McDiarmid's proposal at the time, and so far little has been done to implement it on a national scale. Nevertheless, it would seem worthy of further study and experimentation, perhaps in several parts of the country.

It is important that future research in education for librarianship include the same type of periodic examination of the whole system that has been sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation in the past. The Williamson, Munn, and Wheeler reports are documents of major importance. At the same time the library schools themselves should scrutinize carefully the performance of their own graduates in much the same manner that Danton and Merritt have recently reported on in "Characteristics of the Graduates of the University of California School of Librarianship."<sup>23</sup> Separate and special attention should be given in such investigations to the records of the Ph.D.'s who will come from Illinois, Columbia, and Michigan in the next few years. The library schools must also be frank enough to examine themselves as institutions and to try to answer the questions that invariably arise when a new library school is proposed or an existing one expanded: What has been the influence of the school on library development within the area it serves? Could the investment in the school have been put to better use in an expansion of a state library agency's services? Would other university departments and bureaus have been in a better position to conduct the research that will appear in the future in *The Library Quarterly* and in *Library Trends*?

On the national level we still know very little about some of the vital aspects of preparation of future librarians. The problem of recruitment remains acute; and it is essential to know why we attracted the librarians who are practicing today, why we do not attract to our ranks still others whom we would like to have as professional colleagues. Comparative studies of library school curricula are needed at regular intervals. We need to know whether more or less uniformity is desirable, and how uniformity or lack of it is caused. In any event there will always have to be minimum standards; and these standards can only be established after careful investigation of the curriculum, the physical facilities, and the qualifications and status of library school



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teachers. These same problems are equally applicable on the international scale in this day when we are establishing American-type library schools in many other parts of the world.

The contradictory and confused nature of available information on status and salaries is a matter for grave concern. However expensive and time-consuming it may be, the periodic compilation of this information would be invaluable. It should include specific data comparing library salaries in a large number of institutions with faculty salaries for corresponding ranks. There should be detailed reports on individual solutions of the status problem in colleges and universities where it was not possible to duplicate other patterns. At the same time the construction of hypothetical classification and pay plans could add to our backlog of information necessary for approaching specific problems. Perhaps the most realistic approach to the status and salary problem is more honest re-examination of the time-honored criteria for success in librarianship such as appears in the Danton-Merritt study. When we know exactly why successful librarians have succeeded, we will be in a better position to train men and women who can demand and get salaries and status denied to a large proportion of professional librarians today.

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